

REMARKS

Claims 1-30 are pending in the application. Claims 1-8, 18-25 and 28 stand rejected. The Applicant's attorney has amended claims 1 and 18-25. As discussed below, all claims remaining in the application are now in condition for allowance.

Rejection Of Claims 1-7, 18-19, 22-23 and 28 Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) As Being Anticipated By JP 52-143691 A ('691 patent)

Claim 1

Claim 1 as amended recites a bay disposed in a frame and operable to receive a mission module operable to provide mission-specific functionality to the vessel while disposed in the bay.

For example, referring, *e.g.*, to FIGS. 1 and 2 and paragraphs 16-24 of the present application, a ship 100 includes a hull structure or frame 115 that is designed to accept one or more mission modules 105. Mission modules 105 are designed with different capabilities that, when interfaced with the ship 100, provide the ship 100 with mission-specific functionality for respective types of missions. For example, the mission module 105 may enhance the non-module, *i.e.*, permanent, resources of the ship 100 for compatibility with the type of mission(s) for which the module is designed. Consequently, the ship 100 may include a general operator/control station, which the computer system of the module 105 can configure for the corresponding type of mission via an interface with the ship's computer system. Or, the module 105 may carry extra fuel and supplies for a long range mission.

In contrast, the '691 patent fails to teach a bay disposed in a frame and operable to receive a mission module operable to provide mission-specific functionality to the vessel while disposed in the bay. The '691 patent at, *e.g.*, FIGS. 1-9 teaches a vessel with a frame 1 having a bay 3 operable to receive and launch a boat 2 (regarded by the

Examiner as a mission module) via what appears to be a tractor belt 4. However, there is no indication that the '691 patent teaches that the boat 2 provides mission-specific functionality to the vessel while disposed in the bay.

Claims 18-19

Claims 18-19 are patentable for reasons similar to those discussed above in support of claim 1.

Claims 2-8, 20-25 and 28

Claims 2-8, 20-25 and 28 are patentable by virtue of their respective dependencies from claims 1 and 19.

Rejection Of Claims 1-8, 18-19, 22-23 and 28 Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) As Being Anticipated By JP 06-040379 A ('379 patent)

Claim 1

The '379 patent fails to teach a bay disposed in a frame and operable to receive a mission module operable to provide mission-specific functionality to the vessel while disposed in the bay. The '379 patent at, e.g., FIGS. 1-2 teaches a vessel with a frame 2 defining a bay operable to receive and launch a boat 7 (regarded by the Examiner as a mission module). However, there is no indication that the '379 patent teaches that the boat 7 provides mission-specific functionality to the vessel while disposed in the bay.

Claims 18-19

Claims 18-19 are patentable for reasons similar to those discussed above in support of claim 1.

Claims 2-8, 20-25 and 28

Claims 2-8, 20-25 and 28 are patentable by virtue of their respective dependencies from claims 1 and 19.

**Rejection Of Claims 1-7, 18-25 and 28 Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) As Being
Unpatentable Over Bender In View of the '691 Patent**

Claim 1

Bender at, e.g., to FIGS. 1-4 and associated discussion teaches a remotely controlled vehicle 36 (mother vessel) cooperating with a remotely controlled vehicle 10 (regarded by the Examiner as a mission module) for mine-warfare countermeasures. However, as acknowledged by the Examiner, Bender is silent on the vehicle 10 being accommodated in a bay of the mother vessel.

Accordingly, for the reasons discussed elsewhere herein in support of the patentability of claim 1, Bender and the '691 patent, taken each alone or in combination, fail to teach the limitations of claim 1.

Claims 18-19

Claims 18-19 are patentable for reasons similar to those discussed above in support of claim 1.

Claims 2-8, 20-25 and 28

Claims 2-8, 20-25 and 28 are patentable by virtue of their respective dependencies from claims 1 and 19.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, all claims remaining in the application are in condition for allowance. Therefore, the issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at (425) 455-5575. **The Examiner**

is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned to discuss this paper prior to issuing a rejection of the claims in response thereto.

In the event additional fees are due as a result of this amendment, you are hereby authorized to charge such payment to Deposit Account No. 07-1897.

Dated this 26th day of August 2005.

Respectfully submitted,

GRAYBEAL JACKSON HALEY LLP

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. G. Scott Born', written over a horizontal line.

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